**Unit Planning: A Teacher’s Guide to Creating a Unit using Board Protocols**

**Written, Compiled and Edited by**

**Ian Baillie**

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**Introduction**

Recently, I had an “a-ha” moment at school. A fellow teacher was relating a story to me and later in the week, the meaning of the story hit me. A teacher at my school runs a guitar club at lunch hour. He invites students to bring their guitars and they use his room to practice, learn and share. One student played for him when no one was around. The teacher was very impressed with the student. The student did things with the guitar that the teacher, who had been playing for many years, could not do. When asked if he had taken lessons, the student replied “no”. When asked how long he had been playing, he responded, “3 or 4 months”. At first I was impressed and slightly jealous (I have always wanted to learn how to play the guitar). A few days later as I was rethinking the conversation, I had my “a-ha” moment. Doing something extraordinary like becoming very proficient with the guitar in a very short period of time is not just the result of innate skill. If a person has the drive and motivation to succeed at something, he/she will find a way to do it.

That is the reason for this binder. This binder is as much for me as it is for anyone else. It is meant to help teachers find new ways to create “a-ha” moments for their students. Teaching is hard enough today without more rules to follow or framework’s to navigate. Hopefully you do not see this as just another framework to ignore (hey, I am a teacher, I know).

I have tried to explain everything in terms teachers will relate to. I have tried to use examples and explain my reasoning so that teachers will see value in them. I have included as many instructional resources as I could find in order to make the job of looking for ideas just a little bit easier.

**Why use it?**

Teachers are busy. Teachers are too busy. Most teachers do not want another form to fill out, another acronym to remember. Therefore, I will attempt to include with every step a reason why it can benefit you. These reasons are created by teachers, not authors. I want to make your life easier, not harder.

I hope this binder helps you the way writing it has helped me.

**DI and MI and CIA and KGB… and SOS: The Board Protocols: MI, DI, BbD and Assessment**

**Multiple Intelligences: Again…**

**What are they?**

Multiple Intelligences (MI) is a theory developed by Howard Gardner that states that… BORING!

The Coles Notes version of M.I. is this: Some guy has developed 7 or so ways that humans learn. Rarely does one human only learn in one way. These 7 ways of learning can be combined in various ways. Most teachers are verbal-linguistic learners. That is code for we like to listen to people talk. M.I. and brain-based research has been telling psychologists that generally, the students we teach are not similar to teachers. Big surprise! Therefore if they do not learn like we do, we should not be teaching the way we learn best. M.I. helps teachers figure out how to get the most out of their students. Little Bobby might be assigned an essay as a summative assignment. Perhaps his strongest intelligence is visual. Bobby may then get a level 2 on his essay. But had he been given an assignment that is more in line with his strengths (pictorial essay perhaps), he might have been able to express more of his knowledge.

The good news is that in any given class, you probably will not have all 7 MI’s present. An administrator would not expect to see 7 learning options for a lesson.

On the following pages are Class Profile Templates that you may want to use to help keep track of students (At the time of creation of this document, only draft versions were available of the UCDSB class/student profile templates). These are only a suggestion. Improve, disregard or find an alternative if you think it would work better.

**How do they help me?**

-tells teachers where student strengths and weaknesses lie

-helps you create a student profile (why is this important?)

-Students will be more motivated to complete assignments that play to their natural strengths

**Can I do it in ANY class?**

Yes, you can. M.I. is helpful for all teachers. One teacher can give an MI survey to 1 class, but the results can affect all of the teachers of that class.

**How do I do it in my class?**

Included in this binder are several MI surveys. Distribute and complete them, as a class at the beginning of the year/term/semester. As a teacher, complete it with them, take part in it. Incorporate tech (use the smartboard and clickers and let the computer compile the results for you!). Work with other teachers to do surveys for an entire grade. Keep the parents informed!

**Backwards Design Part Deux**

**What is it?**

Teachers are creators. We create lessons, units and programs of study for many different grades and abilities. In this way, you can draw a parallel between a teacher and an architect. We both create something.

An architect has many stages of planning before beginning to build a structure. Failure to do so would result in many oddly shaped and short lived buildings. Therefore the architect has a picture in his/her mind that is then transferred to paper and then modelled and studied. This is necessary to prevent building failure.

For a teacher, failing to have the end result in mind is not going to result in the entire lesson/unit implode, forcing the teacher to clear away the rubble and start over. However, knowing what you want the students to learn, before you teach it will allow you to find better ways to teach the material.

Backwards design is planning with the end in mind. It is first deciding which key concepts, curriculum expectations you want the students to end up learning and THEN figuring out assessment and teaching methods to get the students to that end point of understanding. Perhaps it can be compared to “teaching to the test”, with the “test” being any expectation or knowledge that you decide upon.

Backwards Design may seem like a new concept, or a fad that is being pushed by the school board today and might be discarded in a few years. Perhaps. In practice, many teachers use elements of backwards design without knowing. Have you ever stood in front of the class, having planned out the next few weeks, roughly, in your head and spoken about upcoming concepts they are going to learn? Perhaps you do not yet know HOW they are going to learn it, but you know that you want to cover it. This is a form of backwards design.

The next goal is to develop an entire unit using the framework of backwards by design. This does not have to follow any set format. There is no blackline master that you MUST follow. This binder may provide guides and forms to use if desired, but they are not a requirement for creating using backwards design.

**Why use backwards by design?**

It will keep your administration team happy. In the end, that will lead to a happier teacher too.

It will reduce the amount of time you spend mid-unit searching for ideas/lessons.

No more late night runs to blockbuster for a “lesson idea”.

No need to reinvent the wheel- re-tool existing units using backwards design for a quick fix.

It helps keep the teacher from straying from the unit plan and therefore reduces wasted periods.

**Stages in the Backward Design Process**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Identify desired results.** |  |  |  |  |  | **We must ask...**    **What would we accept as evidence that students have attained the desired understandings and proficiencies - BEFORE - proceeding to plan teaching  and learning experiences?** |
|  | http://www.pgcps.pg.k12.md.us/~croom/Images/pinkarrow_.jpg |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Determine acceptable evidence.** |  |  |
|  |  |  | http://www.pgcps.pg.k12.md.us/~croom/Images/pinkarrow_.jpg |  |
|  |  |  |  | **Plan learning experiences and instruction.** |

**Differentiated Instruction**

Differentiated Instruction (DI) is a method of teaching that is meant to engage more of your students. If DI could be boiled down to one word, it might be “options”. DI is not meant to be THE best or only way to teach. As a teacher, the best tool you have for planning instruction is your brain and your common sense. Rather, DI is a framework to help guide your brain to be more creative and effective.

**What can I DI?**

*Differentiate content (topic)*

The content of a lesson/unit is the knowledge/skills/expectations that you expect the students to learn. The goal is to teach the same concepts but in more than one way, to engage those students who learn in different ways. Sometimes, the concepts delivered will vary according to student need (as per IEP perhaps). Examples of differentiated content include:

* Using reading materials at varying readability levels
* Using spelling or vocabulary lists at readiness levels of students
* Presenting ideas through both auditory and visual means
* Using reading buddies
* Meeting with small groups to re-teach an idea or skill for struggling learners, or to extend the thinking or skills of advanced learners

As mentioned earlier and as will be mentioned later, most teachers use common sense and already practice this, whether through choice or via IEP accommodations.

* + 1. *Differentiate process (activities)*

Here, the “process” refers to activities in which the student engages in order to make sense of or master the content. Differentiating the process of a lesson/unit consists of being aware of your students learning preferences and providing different activities to meet some/all of those needs. Depending on the student (high needs or low needs students) you can challenge or support a student using different learning activities. Examples of activities that can be used to differentiate process are:

* Tiered activities through which all learners work with the same concepts, but proceed with different levels of support, challenge, or complexity;
* Scaffolding
* Flexible grouping (according to: readiness, random, teacher and students)
* Varying the length of time given to master a concept
  + 1. *Differentiate product (deliverable)*

The product is essentially what the student produces at the end of the lesson to demonstrate the mastery of the content (End of unit would be culminating activity). Generally this takes the form of tests, evaluations, projects, reports, or other activities. Differentiating the product is often what teachers think of first, when confronted with DI. Once teachers have an understanding of their students’ learning styles, they can differentiate the product in order to increase student success. Examples of alternative assignments/deliverables based on multiple intelligences can be found in the appendix under “A and E Activities based on MI”.

**Why Use DI?**

The following are some reasons why you should DI some part of your lesson or unit:

* Giving students interesting options for culminating assignments will increase engagement.
* Increased engagement leads to better grades and FAR fewer classroom management concerns.
* Easy “extra” assignments or alternatives in case students are going to be away for a period of time

**Assessments- Pre-Assessment, Formative, and Summative**

**Assessment for Learning (pre-assessment)**

*What is it?*

Pre-assessment (*AKA Assessment for Learning, AKA Diagnostic Assessment*) provides teachers with information about students’ readiness to learn new knowledge and skills, and about their interests and attitudes. This information establishes the starting point for the new learning, and helps teachers to plan differentiated tasks and assessments that meet students’ learning needs, interests and learning preferences. Teachers and students use this information to set appropriate learning goals. Examples of Assessment for Learning could be anticipation guides, structured debate, surveys, etc. Less important than what the activity is, is what you do with the results of the activity.

*How does it help me?*

Assessment for Learning helps teachers identify what students need to learn. It helps reduce time wasted covering material that students already know. It also helps teachers avoid teaching over students’ heads. Understanding what your students know and don’t know is extremely valuable.

**Assessment as Learning (formative)**

*What is it?*

Assessment as Learning (AKA formative) is intended to give teachers and students precise and timely information so teachers can adjust instruction in response to individual student needs, and students can adjust their learning strategies or set different goals. This use of assessment differs from Assessment ofLearning in that the information gathered is used for the specific purpose of helping students improve *while they are still gaining knowledge and practising skills.* Teachers who view assessment as an integral part of learning engage students as collaborative partners in the learning process.

*How does it help me?*

Formative assessment shows the teacher how much the students have understood. Depending on the type of formative assessment, you can gather immense amounts of information. It helps teachers understand how well their lessons and teaching went. Formative assessment forces teachers to analyze and possibly de-construct and re-construct their lessons.

**Assessment of Learning (Summative)**

*What is it?*

Assessment of Learning is summative in nature and is used to confirm what students know and can do, to demonstrate whether they have achieved the curriculum outcomes, and, occasionally, to show how they are placed in relation to others. Ideally, this is the stuff that goes on the report card, not formative.

*How does it help me?*

Assessment of Learning helps determine if the students learned all the curriculum expectations as you had hoped. It allows the teacher to make final judgements on their own teaching and determine the level of understanding of his/her students.

**Designing a Unit**

**Step 1: Break out the Curriculum Documents**

**Find and record learning expectations and objectives**

Now that you have some understanding of multiple intelligences, backwards design and differentiated instruction and how they all interact, it is time to start planning a unit. Ideally, teachers will complete MI surveys and check for readiness prior to creating a unit. Use the *Class Profile Template* provided earlier to help organize your students’ needs. However in some situations such as the beginning of the year, taking over a class mid-year or general lack of time, this is not possible. If you are designing your unit without knowledge of your students, be ready and willing to adapt or change your lessons/activities according to the needs of the students.

To begin, open your curriculum documents (online versions can be found at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/curricul.html>). Even if you have a pretty good idea of what you want to do, it is worthwhile to work from the curriculum documents. It will help keep you focussed and organized later on.

Once you have navigated to the correct pages, look at the specific expectations. If you are designing a unit focussing on short stories, you may want to start with the reading and writing strands. They will not, however, be your only strands. Use the *Unit Expectations template* on the following page to record the expectations that you would like to cover. This template is a guide to help you organize and record all the strands that you will teach and how many times each will be covered. At the bottom of the template is a space for up to 17 different unit activities. They correspond to the 17 columns in the chart.

Once you have looked through the obvious strands of the curriculum, sort through the less obvious strands. Perhaps, for a short story unit, you might look to media literacy in order to make a comparison between the written and video versions of a story. Be creative when recording expectations. You may find that once you have different options in front of you, different approaches float into your brain.

**Step 2:The Big Picture**

**Identify the big ideas, essential understandings and overarching concepts from the expectations that you have identified**

What is an essential understanding or an enduring understanding (used interchangeably)? Can I just record the curriculum expectations? Not really. Most expectations are not worded to provoke thought or interest. However, you can alter the wording of some expectations, and slightly change your approach towards a concept to create enduring understanding.

You don’t have to spend any time on essential understandings, but you should. If you don’t, the odds are lowered that students will be engaged. E.U.’s help you and the students understand the “why’s”- Why bother? Why does this matter to me? Why should I care? Essential understandings provoke thought and questioning. They engage the students’ curiosity and make them wonder and explore.

Sounds easy! It is not. Many of our students come to us pre-conditioned. They are used to doing things a certain way, and are not used to questioning their learning or exploring concepts. This will be a slow process to get students to understand the deeper meanings and reasoning. As a teacher, creating and explaining the enduring understandings will be the difference between having students work hard to learn their “–er verbs” for Francais, only to forget them the month after the test, and having them understand the reasons why they should learn “–er verbs”.

To help determine whether a concept is an E.U., ask yourself /think about the following statements:

* + 1. Is this idea worth knowing as an adult? Will learning it make my students better adults? (Think of the big picture)
    2. Consider your subject in terms of large transferable concepts such as conflict or discovery
    3. Is this concept relevant? Cause for exploration or discussion?

**Step 3: Develop Essential Questions**

Essential questions are closely related to essential understandings. In fact, you should have questions and understandings listed at the bottom of the “Unit Expectations Template” to help guide you through the creation of your unit. Essential questions could be compared to questions posed at a dinner party that get everybody talking and debating. Try looking at your chosen learning expectations and brainstorming essential understandings and essential questions simultaneously.

**Essential questions should**:

* Not have one single answer
* Connect to students’ lives
* Engage higher order thinking
* Ignite students’ curiosity and wonder
* Lend themselves to multidisciplinary studies
* Not be too complicated to answer

**To develop essential questions you should:**

* Know the most important concepts of the unit as a whole
* Think about the controversies and misconceptions (if any) inherent in the topic
* Pre-assess your students to determine interests and misconceptions
* Write the questions in student friendly language (have the students participate during creation)
* Avoid biased questions
* Decide which skills your students are going to need in order to answer the questions

An example of an essential question for a Language unit might be “How does the media influence teenagers?” See the sample lesson plan on the next page for another example of an essential question.

**Step 4: Plan Assessments- Pre-Assessment, Formative, and Summative**

*Planning Pre-, formative and summative*

Knowing the value of having these 3 types of assessment throughout your units, now is the time to design your unit activities or assignments. Once the activities are designed, you can include them on the unit planning template sheet mentioned earlier.

Start with your summative assessments. Look to your list of activities sorted according to MI. Use these coupled with a DI strategy such as a choice board or menu or a tiered assignment to incorporate your knowledge of the learners in your classroom. On following page you will see an example of a choice board completed for a spelling lesson/unit and a choice menu completed for a probability unit. Note that the multiple intelligences being used are listed for students to see on the choice board. There is no need to worry about when you will hand out the assignments yet. That will come later. Create fun, engaging activities now.

Perhaps you still feel more comfortable using a traditional approach to summative assessment. Use the MI/DI approach for your formative assessment.

Remember, to save headaches later, do a pre-learning assessment, or a skills inventory prior to beginning your unit.

*Recording and organizing your unit activities*

At this point, you should have a template filled out with all of the curriculum expectations and your enduring understandings and essential questions. Now, you should record the activities you created at the bottom using numbers 1 – 17. Try to place them in a rough order (summative near the end, diagnostic near the beginning).

Now, make use of the curriculum expectations that you previously recorded and put a checkmark under the correct column depending on which expectations each activity covers. If an assignment does not cover any curriculum expectations (pretty rare, you can always stretch the meaning of the expectation), consider replacing it with another that does, or save it for an anchor activity.

**Step 5: Individual Lessons Throughout the Unit**

Your next, and possibly final step is to plan the dates of all your lessons. You know what you want the students to know, you understand the skills they must acquire to get that knowledge, but you have not planned out the individual lessons that will get them there. At this point I would recommend using a calendar to organize your unit. I have included a “Week at a Glance” template on the following page, but you can use any form of calendar you wish. A monthly calendar will help you see the big picture better than a weekly one.

Place the activities on the days you want them completed and work backwards from there to ensure that all concepts needed to complete the assignment have been completed in time.

I have not included a lesson plan template. Everyone has seen dozens of them and choosing one is a highly personal decision. However, once you find a lesson plan template that works for you, you can begin planning the smallest parts of your unit. Remember, much of the unit planning framework above can be applied to a lesson plan as well. You can DI you product, process and content. Try a lesson in which you offer choices for HOW the students learn (think tactile vs. text vs. kinesthetic).

**Unit Planning using MI/DI/BbD in 100 words or less (87 actually)**

1. Know your students🡪 complete an MI survey
2. Know your students🡪 complete a diagnostic assessment
3. Find and record the relevant curriculum expectations
4. Figure out what you REALLY want them to get out of the unit (E.E.) and record
5. Using your MI knowledge, create some activities and assignments. Give options for some/all
6. Record which curriculum expectations are covered by each activity
7. Use a calendar to map out the route to gaining the required knowledge
8. Design individual lessons to meet the requirements

**Unit Planning using MI/DI/BbD in 10 words or less**

Know your students, based on Essential Understandings, give them choice.

**Unit Planning using MI/DI/BbD as a math equation**

(Differences + Choices x Big Ideas) / organization = student engagement

**Online Resources for Differentiated Instruction**

**An Idea Bank for Teachers of the UCDSB**

For additional ideas, applications, and resources, see your LRC (Props to Craig Beckett!)

* <http://help4teachers.com/index.htm>
  + Kathie Nunley is a guru of Layered Curriculum, designed to provide diversity of choice and appeal to learning styles of all students, especially at the secondary level. Kathie’s Homepage provides a breakdown of the Layered (Tiered) Curriculum idea, and numerous links to lesson plans, teaching tips, articles for administration and staff, and resources including a free newsletter. Check it out and see what other teachers are doing!
* <http://help4teachers.com/samples2.htm>
  + Kathie Nunley’s Layered (Tiered) Curriculum Lesson Plans website – hundreds of examples to view, download, and modify from. These [DI] lesson plans were created by teachers from around the globe. Feel free to browse, borrow and adapt as needed!! If you've made Layered Curriculum unit sheets for any discipline or grade level, please send them to share. (Email them to [kathie@brains.org](mailto:kathie@brains.org))
* <http://www.gpschools.org/ci/diff/resources.htm>
  + This website provides a number of resources and strategies for differentiating your instructional strategies. There is a direct link to Carol Tomlinson’s site (the preeminent developer for DI), information on tiered curriculum and Kathie Nunley’s approaches, and checklists for schools pursuing the DI model. A great starting resource for teachers with some model lessons plans and additional resources.
* <http://help4teachers.com/heatherpaper.htm>
  + Heather Clayton is a Layered Curriculum Trainer for Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB. This paper outlines Understanding by Design and Layered Curriculum as it applies to the Ontario Curriculum.
  + Clayton, Heather. From the Ideological to the Concrete: Ideas from Paulo Friere, Understanding by Design and the Ontario Curriculum And their Application to Layered Curriculum. 2004.
* <http://www.caroltomlinson.com/index.html>
  + Check out The Differentiation Toolbox under “Other Resources” for great tools and best practices to implement DI, including anchor activities and learning contracts.
* <http://www.resources.8j.net/>
* <http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/>
  + This link contains a ready-made slide show that discusses the following aspects of DI. Might be very useful for classroom of staff meeting presentations. **Presentation by Ella L. Taylor, Ph.D.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [1. Thinking about Differentiation](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor01.php) [2. What do we differentiate?](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor02.php) [3. Different work, not more or less](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor03.php) [4. Different work](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor04.php) [5. Differentiating Content](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor05.php) [6. Differentiating Process](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor06.php) [7. Differentiating Products](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor07.php) | [8. Assignments](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor08.php) [9. Differentiated Reading](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor09.php) [10. Whole class](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor10.php) [11. Whole class](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor11.php) [12. Small-Group](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor12.php) [13. Peer Tutoring/Peer Pairing](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor13.php) [14. Peer-to-Peer](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor14.php) | [15. Combined Grouping Formats](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor15.php) [16. Additional strategies](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor16.php) [17. Using Discussion in Class](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor17.php) [18. Discussion = Learning Gains](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor18.php) [19. Structuring Discussion](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor19.php) [20. What about math?](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor20.php) [21. Remember](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor01/taylor21.php) |

* [**http://www.resourc1**](http://www.resourc1)**.** Thinking about Differentiationes.8j.net/taylor02/
* This link provides an even bigger slideshow that outlines the essentials of DI.
* Tips, Tricks and Techniques for Reaching All Students - Presentation by Ella L. Taylor, Ph.D.
  + (Dr. Ella Taylor's January, 2004 presentation to the Instruction Systems Cadre)

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| [1. Tips, Tricks and Techniques](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor01.php) [2. Agenda](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor02.php) [3. What is differentiation?](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor03.php) [4. Why differentiate?](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor04.php) [5. Why differentiate?](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor05.php) [6. What do we differentiate?](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor06.php) [7. Differentiation Inventory](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor07.php) [8. Differentiating Content](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor08.php) [9. Differentiating Process](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor09.php) [10. Differentiating Products](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor10.php) [11. Differentiating Products](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor11.php) [12. The Learning Environment](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor12.php) [13. What do you teach?](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor13.php) [14. Essential Questions](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor14.php) [15. Our old friend,](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor15.php) | [17. Neuroscience weighs in](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor17.php) [18. Additional Strategies](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor18.php) [19. Using Discussion in Class](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor19.php) [20. Discussion = Learning Gains](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor20.php) [21. Structuring Discussion](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor21.php) [22. Strengths & Weaknesses](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor22.php) [23. Tiered Assignments](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor23.php) [24. Six Ways to Structure](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor24.php) [25. Tiered by Challenge](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor25.php) [26. Tiered by Complexity](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor26.php) [27. Tiered by Resources](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor27.php) [28. Tiered by Outcome](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor28.php) [29. Tiered by Process](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor29.php) [30. Tiered by Product](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor30.php) [31. Make it Invisible](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor31.php) [32. When & How](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor32.php) | [33. When & How](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor33.php) [34. Management](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor34.php) [35. Differentiating Products](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor35.php) [36. Powerful Products](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor36.php) [37. Powerful Product assignment](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor37.php) [38. Powerful Products](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor38.php) [39. Different work, not more or less](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor39.php) [40. Different work](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor40.php) [41. Quality Criteria for Diff. Products](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor41.php) [42. Managing Differentiation](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor42.php) [43. Prepare Students & Classroom](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor43.php) [44. Think Through Task in Advance](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor44.php) [45. What can be done in advance](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor45.php) [46. Managing Students](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor46.php) [47. Have Fun!](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor47.php) [48. Resources](http://www.resources.8j.net/taylor02/taylor48.php) |

* <http://www.resources.8j.net/gaps02.php>
  + This website provides Online Resources and instructional articles for Differentiating Content, Process, and Product. At the bottom of the page notice an article directed at Differentiating for a Standards-Based Curriculum.
* <http://www.openc.k12.or.us/reaching/tag/dcsamples.html>
  + This link provides a number of DI created unit plans in PDF format, spanning Elementary to Secondary. While it states it is about “Reaching All Students,” there is a focus on challenging High-End learners. The site emphasizes the cross-curricular nature of DI unit when organizing to meet student interests and move them beyond their benchmarks. There are some science units and a trigonometry unit developed here that might be a starting point for math teachers.
* <http://www.internet4classrooms.com/di.htm>
  + Tips and strategies that support differentiation
* <http://www.sde.com/>
  + staff development for educators; lots of DI resources; log-in

- <http://oak.cats.ohiou.edu/~glasgow/Glasgow-activities.pdf>

http://michaelmassiah.x7hosting.com/schools/downloads/stratdifferinstruction.pdf

-http://www.uhseport.net/published/k/sh/kshaw/collection/1/

http://www.flec.ednet.ns.ca/staff/What%20is%20Backward%20Design%20etc.pdf

- <http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/mi/wilson1.htm>

-http://www.members.shaw.ca/priscillatheroux/differentiating.html

-http://www.ualberta.ca/~jpdasddc/incl/difinst.htm

- http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/di/difinstgains.htm

**FAQ**

**Do I have to plan all new units?**

No, you can modify your existing units. Look over and evaluate what you have. Your job will be easier than starting from the beginning. Include knowledge of learning styles and options for students and you are on your way.

**My class sizes are too large for DI!**

Many teachers, especially elementary teachers, are dealing with class sizes that make many “fun” or “special” or “interesting” instructional techniques, difficult or impossible. Therefore SOME of these DI options may not be for you. However, SOME of the DI options above can still work for you. Work collaboratively with your resource teacher(s) and other classroom teachers to divide and conquer when necessary. Include an EA, if available, in the unit planning to best use his/her time.

With large class sizes, focus on differentiating the product. Whether you have 10 or 100, if you offer options for assignments, more students will be engaged.

**Do I have to plan 30 different learning options for a class?**

No, you do not. DI is about being aware of the needs of the students and giving them options. It is far more realistic to choose the most common 2 or 3 learning styles and use those as springboards to alternate activities.

How would I mark all of those different assignments?

I have too much content to cover!

**Acronyms in Education: From the obvious to the obscure**

MI = Multiple Intelligences

DI = Differentiated Instruction

IEP = Individual Education Plan

EA = Educational Assistant

OSR = Ontario Student Record

ADD = Attention Deficit Disorder

ADHD = Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

IPRC = Identification and Placement Review Committee

DD = Developmentally Disabled

MID = Mild intellectual delay

LD = Learning Disabled

CAS = Children’s Aid Society

ASD = Autism Spectrum Disorder

CAP = Central Auditory Processing

CYW = Child and Youth Worker

BbD = Backwards by Design

CCAT = Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test

LRC = Learning Resource Coach

LRT = Learning Resource Teacher

LSC = Learning Strategies Consultant

SERT = Special Education Resource Teacher

SST = School Support Team

WIAT = Wechsler Individual Achievement Test

SLP = Speech and Language Pathologist

ODD = Oppositional Defiant Disorder

OCD = Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

SEA = Special Equipment Amount

CCAC = Community Care Access Centre

**Differentiated Instruction: Instructional Strategies**

* **Anchor Activities:** are on-going assignments tied to the curriculum and for which students are accountable that can be worked on independently throughout a grading period or longer.
* **Allowing for multiple right answers:** are open-ended assignments that focus on the process of solving the problem and/or critical thinking.
* **Adjusting questions:** In class discussions, tests, and homework, teachers adjust the sorts of questions posed to learners based on their readiness, interests, and learning profiles.
* **Agendas:** These are personalized lists of tasks that a student must complete in a specified time, usually two to three weeks. Student agendas throughout a class will have similar and dissimilar elements. The agendas can be personalized (e.g., include IEP tasks, more challenging work) for individual students, if needed. Students work individually (or in small groups) to complete the agenda tasks.
* **Centers:** are flexible areas in the classroom that address variable learning needs. Centers differ from stations in that centers are distinct. Stations work in concert with one another. Two kinds of centers are particularly useful for differentiated instruction: learning centers and interest centers.
* **Chunking:** is breaking assignments and activities into smaller, more manageable parts and providing more structured directions for each part.
* **Flexible grouping:** matching students to skill work by virtue of readiness, ability, learning styles or MI, not with the assumption that all need the same task, computation skill, writing assignment, etc. Movement among groups is common, based on readiness on a given skill and growth in that skill.
* **Flexible pacing:** allowing for differences in the students' ability to master the curricula.
* **Learning contract:** is a proposal made prior to beginning a project or unit in which the resources, steps toward completion, and evaluation criteria are agreed upon with the teacher.  
    
  **Portfolios:** provide a means for helping teachers and parents reflect on student growth over time. These collections of student work are excellent for helping children set appropriate learning goals and evaluating their own growth.
* **Stations:** are different spots in the classroom where students work on various tasks simultaneously. Stations work in concert with one another. Stations allow different students to work with different tasks. They invite flexible grouping because not all students need to go to all stations all the time or spend the same amount of time in each station.